

Message Text

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62

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-04

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CG-00 COA-02 DLOS-07 SWF-02 L-03

SS-20 SCS-03 NSC-07 DRC-01 /097 W

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R 151642Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8826

USDOC WASHDC

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USDOC WASHDC FOR MARAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN UR

SUBJECT: MARITIME TALKS

1. AS IN PREVIOUS SEMI-ANNUAL REVIEWS OF US-USSR MARITIME AGREEMENT, TALKS ARE BEING CONDUCTED IN THREE WORKING GROUPS--CONSULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS, LINER AND BULK MATTERS. STATUS OF EACH AFTER THREE DAYS OF MORNING AND AFTERNOON SESSIONS IS AS FOLLOWS:

2. CONSULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE. REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS HAS PROCEEDED SMOOTHLY AND APPEARS ESSENTIALLY COMPLETE.

A. SOVIETS HAVE ACCEPTED SOVINFLOR RESPONSIBILITY TO EXTEND ALL NEEDED ASSISTANCE TO US SEAMEN NORMALLY PROVIDED BY GENERAL AGENT AND TO CALL UPON AMERICAN CONSULAR OFFICERS ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES. SOVINFLOR IS IN PROCESS OF HIRING "TWO OR THREE" MULTI-LINGUAL OFFICERS WHO WILL BE AVAILABLE FULL TIME TO SERVE WELFARE REQUIREMENTS OF AMERICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN SEAMEN IN SOVIET PORTS.

3. SOVIETS PROPOSED DROPPING FROM US PORT LIST BELLINGHAM AND

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OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON; EUREKA, CALIFORNIA; PONCE, PUERTO RICO; ERIE,

PENNA., AND BAY CITY, MICHIGAN, AND REPLACING THESE SIX WITH DETROIT; BOSTON; STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA; FERNANDINO, FLORIDA; PASCAGOULA, MISS; AND FREEPORT, TEXAS. USDEL AGREED TO REFER PROPOSAL FOR STUDY BUT POINTED OUT THAT USG WAS UNLIKELY TO AGREE TO TAKING ANY PORTS OFF LIST. TO CONTRARY, IN US VIEW EXPANSION OF BOTH LISTS WAS MORE IN KEEPING WITH PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION NOW OCCURRING IN US-SOVIET MARITIME, COMMERCIAL, AND OVERALL POLITICAL RELATIONS. (FYI: IT WAS INTERESTING THAT AVERIN, AFTER CLAIMING THAT USSR HAD ONLY 62 "COMMERCIAL" PORTS - OF WHICH 41 RPT 41 OPEN TO FOREIGN COMMERCE- DID NOT CHALLENGE US STATEMENT THAT SOVIETS HAD AT LEAST 150 PORTS, VAST MAJORITY OF WHICH WERE PRESUMABLY NOT OF MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE.) IF SOVIETS RETURN TO PORT ISSUE, USDEL WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR EXPANSION OF LISTS ON 1 FOR 1 BASIS. IT IS UNCLEAR AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, WHETHER SOVIETS WILL WISH TO DISCUSS LISTS FURTHER OR WAIT FOR RENEGOTIATION OF MARITIME AGREEMENT ITSELF TO BEGIN THIS FALL.

4. LINER.

A. CONCLUDED INITIAL DISCUSSIONS REGARDING DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION IN LINER CARGOES AND EXPECTATION THAT PARITY WILL BE SOUGHT TO BE ACHIEVED BY END OF 1974.

B. AS TO BREAKDOWN OF ACCOUNTING FOR TRANSSHIPMENT CARGOES ON AN 80/20 BASIS, WE HAVE SUGGESTED A MORE REASONABLE BASIS TO BE 70/30. SOVIETS THEN RECEDED AND SUGGESTED THAT THIS MATTER BE HANDLED ON BASIS OF FACTS OF SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS AND THAT ACTUAL COSTS OR CREDITS INCURRED BY U.S.-FLAG OPERATORS COULD BE BASIS FOR ACCOUNTING.

WILL RECONSIDER PROPORTIONAL ARRANGEMENT AT LATER SESSIONS.

C. "CHEAP" CARGOES REPRESENT ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF USSR EXPORTS TO US. HAVE NOT AGREED TO ANY EXEMPTION TO THESE CARGOES FROM ANNEX III OR PARAGRAPH ONE OF NOVEMBER MEMORANDUM.

5. BULK.

A. DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE ON THE CARRIAGE AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF GRAIN AND OTHER BULK CARGOES AND FREIGHT RATES. SOME PROGRESS BEING MADE ON RECONCILING NATIONAL FLAG CARGO STATISTICS FOR THE FIRST ACCOUNTING PERIOD. DIFFICULTIES HAVE ARISEN FROM USE OF DIFFERENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DATA BASES BY SOVIET AND US SIDES DUE TO DIFFERENT METHODOLOGIES IN DERIVING STATISTICS; ALSO, SOVIET LACK OF KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING ACTUAL SHIPMENTS OF OIL IN BILATERAL TRADE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MARITIME LAW, AGREEMENTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW07283
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740120-0419
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740546/aaaaborq.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARITIME TALKS
TAGS: ETRN, UR, US
To: STATE COM
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005